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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001012

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SO](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - ITALY REQUESTS USG VIEWS ON SITUATION;
IGAD AMENDED PEACE PLAN

REF: A) STATE 47850 B) ROME 00950

Classified By: Pol M/C Thomas Countryman for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

1. (U) This cable includes a request for guidance. See paragraph 6.

2. (C) Summary. According to the MFA, U.S. and international concerns regarding frontline state participation in IGASOM (ref A) had been heeded by IGAD. An unofficial draft report (paragraph 7) on the March 22 core group (Italy, UK, Sweden, EC) meeting outlines divisions among the Somalis and presents the core group's suggestions on how to move the peace process forward. End Summary.

3. (C) MFA Somalia Desk Officer Stefano Dejak told PolOff March 23 that the amended IGAD plan specifies that initial troop deployment will be undertaken by Uganda and Sudan with remaining IGAD countries (frontline states (FLS)) providing logistics, equipment, emergency assistance and training. Dejak expressed Italian and core group satisfaction that concerns regarding frontline state troop deployment had been heeded by IGAD. He also stated that, although there are divisions, the Somalis generally responded favorably. According to Dejak the amended plan will be approved by IGAD and the AU Peace and Security Council and will come to the UNSC for approval "sooner than expected."

4. (C) Dejak remains concerned over disagreements within the Somali TFG, exemplified by President Yusuf's rejection of the Assembly's vote endorsing IGAD deployment without FLS troops. Italy hosted a core group meeting March 22 to discuss the situation and to develop a plan of action. Dejak provided PolOff with an unofficial draft readout (text in paragraph 7) from the meeting.

5. (C) Dejak expressed concern that if the peace process fails, fundamentalist groups will thrive and could work to transform Somali society much like the Taliban did in Afghanistan. With the likely approval of the amended IGAD plan and the possible relocation of the TFG this summer, Dejak stated that "developments are coming to a head and that therefore the core group and the U.S. must make a concerted effort to move the peace process forward."

6. (C) Dejak expressed great satisfaction with the recent USG public statement and demarche on Somalia, but added that Italy and the core group countries want to ensure that they and the U.S. are on the same page strategically and tactically. He stated that Italy and the core group want to work in an integrated manner with the U.S. Mission in Nairobi and are eager to know the USG's frank analysis on recent developments. Specifically, Dejak requested feedback on the USG's reaction to the amended IGAD plan and wanted to know if the USG would support approval of the plan at the Security Council.

7. (C) Rough Draft of core group report on latest developments in Somalia. Note internal numbering.

Begin Text:

"Following the decree issued by Yusuf late Sunday rejecting the parliamentary vote on FLS on legal grounds, and pressure on the Speaker to vacate his residence at the Regency Hotel in Nairobi (suspected political pressure from Kenya), the Speaker made it known that he and a considerable number of MPs (suspected to be around 100) would leave (their Hotels) to Mogadishu immediately according to the Charter (Moga Capital). Gedi moved during yesterday to counter this attempt by mobilising authority to him from the Council of Ministers to decide on where the TFIs should relocate inside Somalia. A stormy and divisive discussion apparently ensued in the cabinet meeting resulting into a walk-out by some 10 Hawiya (powerful) Ministers. The remaining members of the council (some 64 ministers, assistant ministers and ministers of state) voted unanimously in favour of establishing Baidoa and Jowhar as operational sites until the issue of the capital is adequately addressed. Gedi announced this in a press conference late in the afternoon. The Hawiya leaders also contested the continued lack of procedures in cabinet meetings (yesterday's was the first in two months; no written

procedures have been developed or approved; and Council is attended unconstitutionally by assistant ministers and deputy ministers with equal voting rights).

At the same time, Italy hosted an informal meeting in the morning of yesterday to discuss the fast deteriorating situation (present: IT, UK, SW, UN, EC later joined by US). The meeting agreed that immediate informal visits to the Speaker and Gedi should be rushed calling for restraint and cessation of reactionary statements with the view to de-escalate the situation and provide an environment for dialogue.

The group made the same points to both leaders:

That:

Only a lose - lose situation will result from a division in the institutions with the IC not recognising either of the two sides;

Inclusivity and reconciliation remain the two pillars for the peace process and its success and must be restored immediately as the institutions are transitional in nature and decisions must remain consensual derived on the basis of reconciliation and compromise;

Both legal and political issues are the cause of the division, and that focus should be established on the political angle of the problem leaving aside the legal issues since all parties are guilty of respecting rules and resolution will not be to the satisfaction of all parties;

The IGAD Council communiqu  did provide new space and fresh grounds upon which new proposals could be built for the parliament to debate away from the divisive issue of FLS deployment;

All efforts must go to restoring the image of the TFI after the unacceptable confrontation that ensued on 18th March.

The Speaker accepted to consider an opportunity for reconciliation, but wanted to avoid, under every circumstance, a return to debate in Parliament on the FLS issue as this will again become a scene of division. Gedi had a difference story: he told via his Planning Minister (an influential cabinet Minister highly connected to the President) that the most powerful leaders among the Mogadishu-based Hawiya have become too arrogant, rejecting compromise on "operational sites" (Baidoa and Jowhar in addition to Mogadishu) even after the Council approved the inclusion of the Mogadishu Plan into the TFG relocation plans; willingness to appoint a special monitoring committee for Mogadishu; and allow adequate time for its implementation (90 to 120 days). The contention came over the need to move the TFIs to sites other than Mogadishu during this period Gedi informed. The PM said that it was clear that these Hawiya leaders were not going to accept any compromise allowing TFIs to operate in any location inside Somalia other than Mogadishu and for any reason, preferring Nairobi instead. The Hawiya kept on stating that Mogadishu is named as capital in the charter and only the parliament can make changes to this issue. Gedi wanted to rest that authority (for naming operational sites other than Moga) with him.

The international informal group will today meet the Hawiya leaders who abandoned the session yesterday.

Observations:

Senator Raffaelli identified three issues require address after achieving a temporary stand-down agreement for dialogue:

1. Constructing a new proposal using the opportunity IGAD provided (phase one no FLS deployment).

a. The proposal will have to credit viable parts of the Mogadishu Plan into the national TFG relocation plans to avoid giving the impression that Mogadishu is a clan property/issue.

b. Phase One should be allowed adequate duration accommodating the implementation of reconciliation in sensitive parts of Somalia and progress in Mogadishu.

c. Commencing planning for ceasefire and disengagement on countrywide basis.

2. Identifying the approaches to be employed for dialogue

among the divided parties on this new plan, with the view of taking it to parliament for fresh debate having secured

agreement on a compromise vote.

13. Consolidating transparency and accountability in the procedures of conduction of dialogue and decision-making process in both Parliament and Council of Ministers interaction to the satisfaction of all parties." End Text.

18. (U) Khartoum Minimize Considered.

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